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homemakers' chat

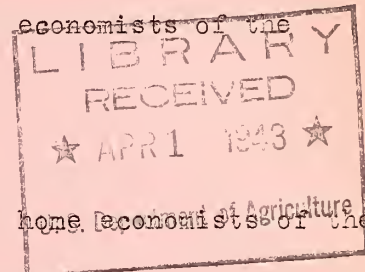
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U. S. DEPARTMENT
OF AGRICULTURE

Douglas--6017

Friday, February 19, 1943.

SUBJECT: "B STANDS FOR BUOYANCY." Information from home economists of the
U. S. Department of Agriculture.
Free publication: "Vitamins from Farm to You".



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These are the days to mind your B's. That's what home economists of the
U. S. Department of Agriculture suggest. And when they say B's, they are re-
ferring to vitamins....the group of vitamins in food that are tonic even for well
people...that can pick you up without letting you down...change "just fair" health
to buoyant health...steady your nerves....aid your digestion and even your
disposition.

In wartime when everyone needs to keep fit, the B's are especially
important. War demands for heavier work....longer hours...and more nervous strain
all may increase the body's need for these vitamins. The wartime food situation
calls for wise shopping to be sure of enough B's in your market basket...and wise
cooking to be sure of enough B's on your dinner plate.

Because the B vitamins are so important to health, it's too bad that many
people find them difficult to understand and difficult to get into meals.
Actually, they aren't as difficult as they seem. The scientists first thought B
was just one vitamin. Now they know it as a group of many vitamins. These
vitamins are usually found together in food and "go together" in aiding good
health. You will probably find it easier to think of the vitamins B together
rather than in separate parts.

Just the same, you will want to know something about the more important
members of the B group. Best-known and in some ways most important of these is
B-one or thiamine. Thiamine has the nickname of the "morale vitamin" because it

keeps nerves steady and disposition calm and cheerful. People who have too little thiamine in food have poor appetite...constipation...slow heart...and a tired feeling...and very often a lot of worries.

Another important B is niacin. Scientists believe niacin is the B that does the most to ward off pellagra...disease that weakens thousands of people in this country. Pellagra sufferers have skin trouble...poor digestion...chronic weakness and weariness...are melancholy, irritable, and restless...a few go insane in the last stages. Enough food containing B vitamins, particularly niacin, prevents this terrible disease.

A third B vitamin goes by the name of riboflavin, needed for normal growth and health. Too little riboflavin causes sores around nose and mouth, and blood-shot eyes that see dimly and suffer from light.

A great many Americans go shy on the B's and suffer the results without realizing it. For one person who becomes out-and-out ill for lack of these vitamins, thousands are borderline cases, suffering from vague symptoms...small but troublesome complaints that keep them under par. For example, the chronic grouch...or the lazybones...the girl who cries too easily...the housewife with all sorts of imaginery complaints...all may be suffering for lack of B.

Here are some reasons why it's all too easy to run low on B, unless you keep careful check on your meals.

To begin with, only a few foods are rich in B. Though most foods in their raw original state contain some of the B vitamins, only a few contain much. The foods that rate as tops for vitamins B are: lean pork, liver, kidney and other meat organs...whole grains...dried beans and peas...soybeans...and nuts, particularly peanuts. Other foods that supply B vitamins but are not rich in them are: lean meat, eggs, milk, vegetables and fruit. Today all white flour and bread have two of the B vitamins added. At present thiamine and niacin are the B's enriching bread and flour. Later riboflavin will also go in.

Another reason people run short of B vitamins is that the body can't store these vitamins. You must have a regular as well as plentiful supply. That means some B food at every meal if possible -- at least some every day.

Another reason people run short of B is that much gets lost in cooking. Heat in cooking destroys some of the B in food. More B dissolves in the cooking water and gets thrown away. So eating fruits and vegetables fresh and raw helps save B. And using the water that vegetables are cooked in saves more.

Serious losses of B vitamins also come from refining and processing food. For example, brown rice is rich in vitamins B. But manufacturers polish the rice and remove the brown covering to make white rice, and the B goes off in the polishing. The same is true of wheat in the milling of white flour. The bran and germ of the whole grain are removed and milled away. The enriching of white flour and bread is to help supply the loss from milling.

Nature had a purpose in placing B vitamins along with starch and sugar in food. At least one of these vitamins helps the body use starch and sugar. So without B the body can't make best use of these calorie foods.

As the wartime food picture changes, you may need to use more of some B foods because supplies of other B foods are short. Many people have been getting a great deal of their B from meat, particularly pork. They can adjust to the present meat situation by using more eggs, dried beans and peas, soybeans and nuts. These foods supply not only B vitamins but also protein, as meat does. Whole grains are also food to count on for B vitamins, especially now when the country has ample supplies of grains.

The Department of Agriculture has a free folder on vitamins that will tell you more about the vitamins B and the foods that supply them. Send a postcard asking for "Vitamins from Farm to You" to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C.

